

# COMMUNITY ELIGIBILITY SUPPORTS CHILDREN'S HEALTH AND LEARNING

In **NEW HAMPSHIRE**, approximately **26,000** children live in food-insecure households, jeopardizing their health and well-being.<sup>1</sup>

School meal programs combat food insecurity by providing millions of children with the nutrition they need to learn and thrive.

The Community Eligibility Provision (CEP) is an option within the school meal programs that increases students' access to nutritious food by allowing schools and school districts serving large numbers of children from families with low incomes to offer meals at no charge to all students.

## How CEP Schools Are Reimbursed

Rather than relying on school meal applications to determine a school's federal reimbursements, CEP schools are reimbursed based on the share of students who are automatically eligible for free school meals without an application because they meet specific criteria, such as being in foster care or participating in certain federal means-tested programs, including SNAP. Schools can adopt CEP if at least 25 percent of students meet these criteria. The more students who are automatically eligible for free school meals, the more federal reimbursement CEP schools receive.

## CEP Is a Win for Students, Families, and Schools

CEP provides all students access to the balanced school breakfasts and lunches they need to be well-nourished and ready to learn, while reducing the stigma often present in school cafeterias when schools have to track students' eligibility for free, reduced-price, and paid meals.

**When students have access to free meals at school, families have lower grocery bills and more money in their household budgets to help make ends meet.**

CEP makes school meal operations more efficient and effective for schools and districts. CEP eliminates the administrative burden associated with school meal applications, strengthens program integrity, and supports school nutrition finances by eliminating school meal debt and increasing participation in school breakfast and lunch programs, which allows for economies of scale.

**In the 2024–2025 school year, 74 percent of eligible schools nationwide adopted CEP. These 54,000 schools reached more than 27 million students around the country.**



In the 2024–2025 school year:

**3 SCHOOLS**

**in NEW HAMPSHIRE adopted CEP. An additional 104 schools were eligible to adopt CEP but did not participate.**

## THE SUPPLEMENTAL NUTRITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (SNAP) CUTS

recently enacted in H.R. 1 will **exacerbate food insecurity** and have ripple effects for the school meal programs, including threatening schools' ability to implement CEP.

As children lose access to SNAP, their automatic eligibility for free school meals is severed and federal reimbursement for meals served in CEP schools decreases, jeopardizing the program's financial viability.

## In NEW HAMPSHIRE, during the 2024–2025 school year:

 **70,426**

**children ate a school lunch and 23,941 children ate a school breakfast on an average school day.<sup>2</sup>**



**3**

**school districts adopted CEP for some or all schools. An additional 38 school districts had schools that were eligible to adopt CEP but did not participate.**



**607**

**children attended schools that adopted CEP.**

**By repealing SNAP cuts and investing in CEP, policymakers can reduce barriers that keep eligible children from receiving free school meals and help families afford to put food on the table.**

<sup>1</sup> Analysis of 2021–2023 Current Population Survey Food Security Supplement, rounded to the nearest 1,000. The data for this analysis was pooled across multiple years to ensure adequate sample sizes for every state. As a result, cross-state comparisons using multiple fact sheets may cover different time periods.

<sup>2</sup> Average daily participation data for school breakfast and lunch are reflective of April 2025. U.S. Department of Agriculture Food and Nutrition Service. (2025). State-level table current activity. Accessed September 24, 2025. <https://www.fns.usda.gov/pd/child-nutrition-tables>

The following table identifies the school districts in each of **NEW HAMPSHIRE'S** congressional districts that contain CEP-eligible and participating schools, as well as the number of children enrolled in CEP schools for the 2024–2025 school year.<sup>3</sup>

| School District                        | Number of CEP-Eligible Schools | Number of CEP-Participating Schools | Students Enrolled in CEP-Participating Schools |
|----------------------------------------|--------------------------------|-------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Congressional District #1</b>       |                                |                                     |                                                |
| CONWAY SAU OFFICE                      | 1                              | 0                                   |                                                |
| DOVER SAU OFFICE                       | 1                              | 0                                   |                                                |
| FARMINGTON SAU OFFICE                  | 2                              | 0                                   |                                                |
| GOVERNOR WENTWORTH REGIONAL SAU OFFICE | 1                              | 0                                   |                                                |
| INTER-LAKES COOPERATIVE SAU OFFICE     | 1                              | 0                                   |                                                |
| LACONIA SAU OFFICE                     | 5                              | 0                                   |                                                |
| MANCHESTER SAU OFFICE                  | 15                             | 0                                   |                                                |
| NASHUA SAU OFFICE                      | 9                              | 0                                   |                                                |
| ROCHESTER SAU OFFICE                   | 5                              | 0                                   |                                                |
| SHAKER REGIONAL SAU OFFICE             | 1                              | 0                                   |                                                |
| SOMERSWORTH SAU OFFICE                 | 3                              | 0                                   |                                                |
| TAMWORTH SAU OFFICE                    | 1                              | 0                                   |                                                |
| WINNISQUAM REGIONAL SAU OFFICE         | 1                              | 0                                   |                                                |
| <b>Congressional District #2</b>       |                                |                                     |                                                |
| BERLIN SAU OFFICE                      | 3                              | 0                                   |                                                |
| CLAREMONT SAU OFFICE                   | 5                              | 1                                   | 175                                            |
| CONCORD SAU OFFICE                     | 3                              | 0                                   |                                                |
| CONTOOCOOK VALLEY SAU OFFICE           | 2                              | 0                                   |                                                |
| FALL MOUNTAIN REGIONAL SAU OFFICE      | 3                              | 0                                   |                                                |
| FRANKLIN SAU OFFICE                    | 1                              | 0                                   |                                                |
| HILL SAU OFFICE                        | 1                              | 0                                   |                                                |
| HINSDALE SAU OFFICE                    | 1                              | 0                                   |                                                |
| INTER-LAKES COOPERATIVE SAU OFFICE     | 1                              | 0                                   |                                                |
| KEENE SAU OFFICE                       | 2                              | 0                                   |                                                |
| LEMPSTER SAU OFFICE                    | 1                              | 0                                   |                                                |

| School District                                                                                  | Number of CEP-Eligible Schools | Number of CEP-Participating Schools | Students Enrolled in CEP-Participating Schools |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------|-------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------|
| LITTLETON SAU OFFICE                                                                             | 2                              | 0                                   |                                                |
| MERRIMACK VALLEY SAU OFFICE                                                                      | 1                              | 0                                   |                                                |
| MONADNOCK REGIONAL SAU OFFICE                                                                    | 1                              | 0                                   |                                                |
| NASHUA SAU OFFICE                                                                                | 9                              | 0                                   |                                                |
| NEWFOUND AREA SAU OFFICE                                                                         | 1                              | 0                                   |                                                |
| NEWPORT SAU OFFICE                                                                               | 2                              | 0                                   |                                                |
| NORTHUMBERLAND SAU OFFICE                                                                        | 1                              | 0                                   |                                                |
| PITTSFIELD SAU OFFICE                                                                            | 1                              | 0                                   |                                                |
| SHAKER REGIONAL SAU OFFICE                                                                       | 1                              | 0                                   |                                                |
| TAMWORTH SAU OFFICE                                                                              | 1                              | 0                                   |                                                |
| WHITE MOUNTAINS REGIONAL SAU OFFICE                                                              | 1                              | 0                                   |                                                |
| WINCHESTER SAU OFFICE                                                                            | 1                              | 1                                   | 366                                            |
| WINDHAM SAU OFFICE                                                                               | 2                              | 0                                   |                                                |
| WINNISQUAM REGIONAL SAU OFFICE                                                                   | 1                              | 0                                   |                                                |
| <b>Unassigned School Districts</b>                                                               |                                |                                     |                                                |
| Not all school districts could be matched to congressional districts due to data inconsistencies |                                |                                     |                                                |
| CLAREMONT SAU OFFICE                                                                             | 1                              | 0                                   |                                                |
| COLEBROOK SAU OFFICE                                                                             | 2                              | 0                                   |                                                |
| FARMINGTON SAU OFFICE                                                                            | 1                              | 0                                   |                                                |
| FRANKLIN SAU OFFICE                                                                              | 1                              | 0                                   |                                                |
| GORHAM SAU OFFICE                                                                                | 1                              | 0                                   |                                                |
| GREENLAND SAU OFFICE                                                                             | 1                              | 0                                   |                                                |
| HAVERHILL COOPERATIVE SAU OFFICE                                                                 | 1                              | 0                                   |                                                |
| HILLSBORO-DEERING SAU OFFICE                                                                     | 1                              | 0                                   |                                                |
| INTER-LAKES COOPERATIVE SAU OFFICE                                                               | 1                              | 0                                   |                                                |
| KEENE SAU OFFICE                                                                                 | 2                              | 0                                   |                                                |

(continued)

**NOTE:** School districts, rather than individual schools, are listed under congressional districts. If a school district crosses congressional district boundaries, all of their schools and children are included in each congressional district. Not all school districts could be matched to congressional districts due to inconsistencies in how the data sources numerically identify and name school districts and schools. Unmatched school districts are listed as unassigned.

<sup>3</sup> Food Research & Action Center. (2025). Community Eligibility Provision database for the 2024–2025 school year. <https://frac.org/community-eligibility-database/>. National Center for Education Statistics (NCES). Common core of data for the 2023–2024 school year. <https://nces.ed.gov/ccd/files.asp>; and NCES. School district geographic relationship files for the 119th Congress. <https://nces.ed.gov/programs/edge/geographic/relationshipfiles>

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(continued)

| School District               | Number of CEP-Eligible Schools | Number of CEP-Participating Schools | Students Enrolled in CEP-Participating Schools |
|-------------------------------|--------------------------------|-------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------|
| LINCOLN-WOODSTOCK SAU OFFICE  | 1                              | 0                                   |                                                |
| MANCHESTER SAU OFFICE         | 4                              | 0                                   |                                                |
| MONADNOCK REGIONAL SAU OFFICE | 1                              | 0                                   |                                                |
| NASHUA SAU OFFICE             | 1                              | 0                                   |                                                |
| NORTHUMBERLAND SAU OFFICE     | 2                              | 1                                   | 66                                             |
| ROCHESTER SAU OFFICE          | 1                              | 0                                   |                                                |
| SAU #35 OFFICE                | 1                              | 0                                   |                                                |
| TAMWORTH SAU OFFICE           | 1                              | 0                                   |                                                |
| WINNACUNNET SAU OFFICE        | 2                              | 0                                   |                                                |

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<sup>3</sup> Food Research & Action Center. (2025). Community Eligibility Provision database for the 2024–2025 school year. <https://frac.org/community-eligibility-database/>. National Center for Education Statistics (NCES). Common core of data for the 2023–2024 school year. <https://nces.ed.gov/ccd/files.asp>; and NCES. School district geographic relationship files for the 119th Congress. <https://nces.ed.gov/programs/edge/geographic/relationshipfiles>